

Operation and Maintenance Agreement

Inspections and maintenance are required to achieve the intended function, benefits, and life of the practice. The landowner/operator is responsible to establish and implement an inspection and maintenance program, per the guidance in this document and an approved Compatible Use Authorization (AD-1160).

Other than inspection and the routine maintenance described below, no other maintenance activities may occur prior to approval by NRCS through a separate Compatible Use Authorization. Prior to beginning other activities, submit a Compatible Use Authorization request to the District Conservationist for approval from the State Conservationist. A letter will be sent to notify the landowner of the results.

Items to inspect and maintain include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Inspect after significant storm events and at least annually to identify repair and maintenance needs.
- The use of fertilizers, mechanical treatments (such as disking), prescribed burning, pesticides or other chemical treatments will not be used in a way that might compromise the wetland purpose. These activities require a compatible use approval.
- Reestablish vegetative cover immediately where scour erosion has removed established seeding.
- Do not graze or hay the wetland or any of the WRP acres.
- Prevent woody vegetation (tree and/or bush growth) from growing in or around the embankments or vegetated spillways. Control tree and bush growth by hand cutting, mowing, or herbicides intended for this purpose. Avoid damaging grass cover.
- Inspect the downstream toe (base) of the embankment (levee or dam) annually. If there are wet areas or seeps at the downstream toe of the embankment, it could indicate a serious problem. Ask for assistance from NRCS to evaluate the seepage.
- Excessive settlement of a levee or embankment (that which can be noticed visually) should be reported to NRCS.
- Fill rills and gullies that form on the embankment or vegetated spillway and reseed as necessary.
- Check frequently for burrowing animals. When found, remove the burrowing animals, replace embankment materials and reseed.
- Maintain a vigorous sod on the embankments with regular mowing. Time the first mowing after nesting birds have hatched (after August 1). Remove excess top grass to prevent smothering. Fertilization of the embankments (if necessary) for maintenance does not require a compatible use approval.
- Repair erosion at outlet of pipe or structure as needed.
- Only adjust flashboards in water control structure to maintain water levels for wildlife management as outlined in an approved compatible use request.
- When found, clear accumulated trash away from water control structure, pipe inlet, or rock riprap or vegetated spillway.
- Any plant species whose presence may jeopardize this practice will be controlled. Spraying or other control methods will be done on a "spot" basis. Consult NRCS for species types that are a concern (I.e. Reed Canarygrass).
- Drainage tile lines that cross through the easement area or outlet from upstream landowners must be maintained and kept fully functioning.
- Recreational vehicle trails or tracks are prohibited. Notify visitors of the easement boundary requirements.
- Boundary markers are kept in place for the life of the easement. When markers are missing or destroyed, notify NRCS.

I agree to inspect and maintain the wetland restoration and associated practices as described above:

Landowner Signature: _____ Date: _____